

This very poorly known flycatcher occurs in low numbers in a restricted range in the marshes of northern Argentina (with probably wintering records from adjacent Bolivia and Paraguay) and merits investigation to determine its status and needs.

DISTRIBUTION Dinelli's Doradito occurs in northern Argentina (north-eastern Córdoba, Santiago del Estero and Tucumán). It has been recorded twice in southern Bolivia (Tarija) and three times in south-western Paraguay (Presidente Hayes), these records probably representing wintering birds (see Ecology). Unless otherwise stated, coordinates are taken from Nores *et al.* (1983).

Argentina The species has been recorded from the following provinces: (*Salta*) unspecified (Olrog 1979, Nores *et al.* 1983), this possibly an assumption based on the record from Tarija, Bolivia; (*Tucumán*) río Salí ("Río Sale"), 27°33'S 64°57'W, October 1903 (two specimens in AMNH), this evidently being the source of all other records from the province (including the type-specimen), since Dinelli (1933) indicated that the species had only been observed along this river "from Tucumán to Santiago del Estero", the other records being: "Tucumán", September 1899 (two specimens in AMNH), January 1901 (specimen in AMNH), October 1904 (type collected: Lillo 1905, Hellmayr 1906b, Esteban 1953b; also Laubmann 1934) and October 1919 (specimen in USNM); (*Santiago del Estero*) western part of the province (Olrog 1979); Bañados de Figueroa, currently (Nores *et al.* 1991); Bañados del río Dulce (30°15'S 62°30'W, extending into Córdoba), October 1971 (T. Narosky *in litt.* 1992) down to the present (Nores *et al.* 1991); (*Santa Fe*) San Carlos (untraced but probably either San Carlos Norte, 31°41'S 61°05'W, San Carlos Centro, 31°44'S 61°06'W or San Carlos Sur, 31°45'S 61°06'W: see Paynter 1985), where two birds were secured in April 1931 (Laubmann 1934); (*Córdoba*) Paso de la Cina (= Limache, 29°49'S 62°48'W), November 1980 (T. Narosky *in litt.* 1992); Bañados del río Dulce (extending from Santiago del Estero), currently (Nores *et al.* 1983, 1991, Mollí 1985); río Segundo, south-western Laguna Mar Chiquita (30°42'S 62°36'W: Paynter 1985), where a pair with a nearly fledged young was observed in March 1991 (D. Willis *in litt.* 1991, M. Pearman *in litt.* 1992) and about six singing males were recorded in mid-October 1991 (P. V. Hayman *in litt.* 1992, M. Pearman *in litt.* 1992); Estancia La Africa, south-east Mar Chiquita, October 1991 (M. Pearman *in litt.* 1992); Laguna Ludueña (31°15'S 63°32'W), undated (Nores *et al.* 1983); Embalse del río Tercero (32°13'S 64°30'W), undated (Nores and Yzurieta 1980; also Nores *et al.* 1983); río de los Sauces (32°32'S 64°35'W), undated (Nores and Yzurieta 1980; also Nores *et al.* 1983).

Bolivia The species is known from two specimens collected at Villa Montes, Tarija, in April and May 1926 (Laubmann 1934).

Paraguay There are only three records, all in the department of Presidente Hayes: Escalante (= Laguna Escalante, 23°50'S 60°46'W: Paynter 1989), where a specimen was collected in August 1960 (Steinbacher 1962); Trans Chaco Highway Km 79, where two birds were observed in May 1990, with another seen on the same road (Km 100) in June 1990 (P. A. Scharf *per* F. E. Hayes *in litt.* 1992).

POPULATION Very little is known; in Argentina, Nores *et al.* (1983) reported it to be "more or less common, although not abundant" in the province of Córdoba, while Narosky and Yzurieta (1987) described it as "scarce or difficult to find". In the Bañados de Figueroa and Bañados del río Dulce, Santiago del Estero, the species is considered "frequent" (i.e. often recorded in low or relatively low numbers) (Nores *et al.* 1991). It is known in Santa Fe from two specimens (see Distribution), although it was regarded as common near San Carlos in the early 1930s (Laubmann 1934); however, M. R. de la Peña (*in litt.* 1991) has never recorded it despite having done a great deal of fieldwork in the province. D. Willis (*in litt.* 1991) considered it to be well known to ornithologists at Mar Chiquita, Córdoba, and M. Pearman (*in litt.* 1992) considered it locally common in that same area. In Bolivia the species is known from two specimens collected in autumn, and in Paraguay it is considered a rare winter migrant to the wetlands of

the Chaco (F. E. Hayes *in litt.* 1992), the three records there being from the autumn and winter months (see Distribution).

ECOLOGY Dinelli's Doradito inhabits periodically flooded rushy and grassy marsh vegetation and shrubbery near watercourses (Olrog 1979, Canevari *et al.* 1991). Laubmann (1934) indicated that the species was common in lagoon areas of San Carlos, where it almost always associated with the Wren-like Rushbird *Phleocryptes melanops*, nesting in the same habitat (but this appears irrelevant: M. Pearman *in litt.* 1992). Dinelli (1933) found the species always perching in only one type of bush, *Baccharis lanceolata*. Feeding habits are little known other than that it searches nimbly for insects amidst the vegetation (Canevari *et al.* 1991). Breeding occurs during the austral spring and also in autumn; at Laguna Mar Chiquita, a pair of adults with a nearly fledged young was observed in March 1991 (see Distribution), and Laubmann (1934) referred to two nests under construction apparently in April 1931 in Santa Fe. At Laguna Mar Chiquita, several males were singing in a long established breeding locality in October 1991 (P. V. Hayman *in litt.* 1992), a female collected in November 1931 (presumably in Tucumán) contained an egg ready to be laid, the nest being placed in the fork of a bush at 1.2 m above the ground (Dinelli 1933), while another nest was found in the Bañados del río Dulce whose two eggs hatched on 30 November 1983 (Molli 1985). However, the nest can also be placed among rushes and tall grasses (Nores and Yzurieta 1980, Canevari *et al.* 1991; see photographs in Molli 1983). The bird appears to be a year-round resident in Argentina (Nores *et al.* 1983), although records in Bolivia and Paraguay suggest northward displacements during the winter (Short 1975, Canevari *et al.* 1991); Dinelli (1933) noted that the species was present in Tucumán from October to January (i.e. breeding season), but did not know if it was a year-round resident there.

THREATS None is known, but the small range, low numbers and insufficient knowledge of its habits and needs are all causes of concern.

MEASURES TAKEN The Laguna Mar Chiquita has been protected as a WHSRN reserve, which includes a small portion of the Bañados del río Dulce (Scott and Carbonell 1986), and the species is not under immediate pressure there (M. Pearman *in litt.* 1992).

MEASURES PROPOSED A survey should concentrate on accurately delimiting the species's breeding range, the number of subpopulations should be assessed and the numbers they contain estimated. It is also important to gather more general information on habitat requirements, feeding, nesting, seasonal movements, etc., in order to determine possible threats affecting it.